



Bring in

University of Hawaii at Manoa

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Office of the Director

March 8, 1979

RP:0009

Mr. Susumu Ono
Department of Land and
Natural Resources
P. O. Box 621
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Dear Mr. Ono:

Conservation District Use Application
Private Commercial Recreational Use
Waipio-Waimanu Valley and Kohala Forest Reserve, Hawaii

The Environmental Center has reviewed the above cited Conservation District Use Application with the assistance of John Sorensen, Geography; Alexander M. Dollar, Public Health; Charles Lamoureux, Botany; and Jacquelin Miller and Barbara Vogt, Environmental Center.

This proposed action has received considerable comment from our reviewers. The applicant's project appears compatible with the area's designation as an estuarine sanctuary, and by structuring such expeditions control of the area may be easier and adverse impacts minimized.

However, each of our reviewers has expressed concern that the issuance of a permit for this particular action may immediately lead to other similar requests from additional back-packing camping commercial firms. Whereas the currently proposed 12 persons/week would undoubtedly have little or no significant impacts on Waimanu or Waipio Valleys, specific concern has been expressed that the environment will be severely stressed if no limits are established to the number of visitors to these areas. Concern has been expressed in particular for proper sewage and trash management as well as an adequate supply of safe drinking water. Some form of specific sewage facility should be required at the camp site areas and along the trails. A portable system in which the South Kona Trading Co. hauls out sanitary waste may be preferable to constructing permanent facilities which could encourage additional parties to share facilities or promote vandalism. We note that all trash will be carried out by the hikers. It might be helpful to the South Kona Trading Co. for them to check with the management of the trails and cabin facilities at Haleakala National Park, where a similar policy is encouraged, to estimate the efficiency of the trash carry-out procedures.

The optimum decision for this proposal would be to defer action until the overall recreational management plan is completed for the area. However, since the completion date of the plan is uncertain, and because an extended delay may pose an unreasonable

hardship on the South Kona Trading Co., we would suggest that if a permit is deemed appropriate that it be granted subject to certain specific conditions. For, example, we would recommend that the permit require certain monitoring studies to assess the impacts of the operation on water quality, trash and sewage disposal in the areas. The permit should be subject to review at the end of two years at which time a full evaluation of the monitoring data would provide excellent baseline data for renewal conditions and for the evaluation of future permit applications and activities in the valleys.

Some of the more specific concerns expressed by our reviewers are as follows:

1. The specific routes and itineraries for campers should be provided to permit evaluation of potential sewage problems and drinking water availability. Will the gulch trail hikers require a separate area for overnight facilities? What is the available supply of trail water? The maps provided are somewhat difficult to read due to poor quality reproduction.
2. What provisions will be made for the supply of cooking fuel? Will only petroleum-base fuels be used or will wood be cut at the camp sites?
3. Cleaning boots before entering the area and on leaving it should be encouraged just as a general effort at slowing down the spread of weeds. Are there specific weeds, however, that people are trying to keep out of this area or keep confined to it?
4. The plant species lists are not very accurate. The names used are, in many cases, outdated ones--e.g., Maba sandwicensis has been called Diospyros ferrea by botanists for the past 40 years. Hapu'u-i'i is called Cibotium chamissoi hapu'u is C. glaucum. Several plants listed as native species are probably not native but were brought to Hawaii by early Polynesian immigrant. These include Aleurites moluccana, Bambuasa sp., Cordyline terminalis, Artocarpus incisus, Cocos nucifera, Colocasia esculenta, Morinda citrifolia, Piper methysticum, and Thespesia populnea.
5. More details are needed on how historic and archaeological sites will be protected.
6. How does the state propose to enforce the conditions of the permit?

Although the area in question has very little undisturbed vegetation remaining, the stream is apparently fairly pristine, as is the stream life if ōpū are present, so care should be taken to protect whatever ecological integrity remains in the valley.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this document and your consideration of the specific concerns which we have identified.

Sincerely,



Doak C. Cox
Director

Mr. Susumo Ono

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March 8, 1979

cc: OEQC
John Sorensen
Alexander Dollar
Charles Lamoureux
Jacquelin Miller
Barbara Vogt